

REMARKS

STATUS OF CLAIMS

Claims 1-6, 8-13 and 15-20 are pending and stand rejected.

Therefore, claims 1-6, 8-13 and 15-20 are now presented for consideration.

Entry and approval of the Response is respectfully requested.

ENTRY OF RESPONSE UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.116

Applicants request entry of this Rule 116 Response because the amendments of claims 1, 10 and 18 should not entail any further search by the Examiner and, otherwise, place the application in condition for allowance.

The Manual of Patent Examining Procedures sets forth in Section 714.12 that "any amendment that would place the case either in condition for allowance or in better form for appeal may be entered." Moreover, Section 714.13 sets forth that "the Proposed Amendment should be given sufficient consideration to determine whether the claims are in condition for allowance and/or whether the issues on appeal are simplified." The Manual of Patent Examining Procedures further articulates that the reason for any non-entry should be explained expressly in the Advisory Action.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

In the Office Action at page 2, item 2, claims 1-6, 8-13, and 15-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Manning et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,898,756) in view of Rosen et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,864,607) and further in view of Bulfer (U.S. Patent No. 6,208,966).

Applicants traverse the rejection and requests reconsideration.

The Examiner contends, in the Office Action at page 3, lines 7-11, that

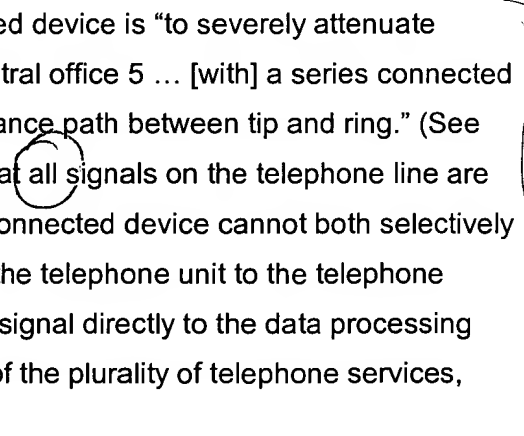
"[w]hat is not taught by Manning et al. is actual disconnection of lines." Rather, Manning et al. teaches (sic) attenuation of the DTMF signals on lines via a switchable a.c. load. However, the

purpose and effect of disconnecting a telephone unit from the network or attenuating a signal to the point that it cannot be recognized or picked up by the network is the same."

Applicants believe that the Examiner may not fully appreciate the present invention and asks that the Examiner review the specification with respect to at least page 22, line 30 to page 23, line 26.

The Examiner contends that the effect of disconnecting (i.e., open circuiting) of the telephone network from the telephone unit or the data processing device is the same as that of attenuating (i.e., short circuiting) the DTMF signals on the lines via the switchable a.c. load. The Examiner is incorrect. Contrary to the operation of the Manning et al. parallel-connected device, according to an embodiment of the present invention recited in claim 1, when the DTMF command signal sent from the telephone unit and indicating one of the plurality of telephone services is detected, the "signal transmission inhibition unit serves" to disconnect the telephone network from the telephone unit, inhibits transmission of the DTMF command signal from the telephone unit to the telephone network, and allows transmission of the DTMF command signal directly to the data processing device. Thus, it is possible to ensure that the DTMF command signal sent from the telephone unit and indicating one of the plurality of telephone services is not transmitted from the telephone unit (i.e., the sending-side user) of the communication support system to any telephone unit (i.e., the receiving-side user) over the public switched telephone network.

The effect of the Manning et al. parallel-connected device is "to severely attenuate signals sent between the telephones 30, 32 and the central office 5 ... [with] a series connected capacitor C1 and resistor R1 ... [providing] a low impedance path between tip and ring." (See Manning et al. at column 4, lines 23-28.) This means that all signals on the telephone line are severely attenuated. Thus, the Manning et al. parallel-connected device cannot both selectively inhibit transmission of the DTMF command signal from the telephone unit to the telephone network and allow transmission of the DTMF command signal directly to the data processing device when the DTMF command signal indicates one of the plurality of telephone services, because all signals are severely attenuated.



Further, in the Manning et al. transmission-inhibiting device, to determine whether a DTMF command signal sent from the telephone network is detected is not possible, because Manning et al. does not disclose or suggest any difference between the telephone unit and the telephone network connected to the transmission-inhibiting device.

Rosen et al. discloses a computer system which communicates "between the PIU-connected telephones 104 and 108 and the computer system 100 ... through radio frequency (RF) communication between the PIUs 106 and 110 and the CIU 102 over the internal telephone network line 130. ... When a PIU-connected telephone is initially picked up, the PIU supplies power to the telephone instead of the phone company 134 and thus prevents the telephone from seizing the telephone network line 130. This effectively isolates the telephone from the external phone line 128, allowing the telephone to communicate with the CIU 102 by RF carrier signals sent over line 130. When the non-PIU telephone 114 is picked up, the CIU 102 turns off its carrier signal to force all telephones to revert to ordinary telephone operation." (See Rosen et al. at column 4, line 58 to column 5, line 6.)

Accordingly, Rosen et al. does not disclose or suggest "to selectively disconnect the telephone network from either of the telephone unit or the data processing device" and furthermore, does not disclose or suggest "a signal transmission inhibition unit including a switch connected between the telephone network and either the telephone unit or the data processing device to switch therebetween ... and selectively inhibits transmission of the DTMF command signal from the telephone unit to the telephone network and allows transmission of the DTMF command signal directly to the data processing device when the DTMF command signal indicates one of the plurality of telephone services" (as recited in claim 1). This is because the Rosen et al. system uses RF carrier signals sent over the network line 130 (see, for example, Fig. 1). Thus, the Rosen et al. telephone network is not switched between either the telephone unit or the data processing device, as the Rosen et al. system merely uses the existing telephone network line 130 but prevents the telephone from seizing the telephone network line 130.

Bulfer, which is directed to "telecommunications network service for converting spoken words to individual DTMF signals" (see Bulfer at column 2, lines 25-27), does not suggest anything related to the above-mentioned distinguishing features recited in claim 1.

Accordingly, claim 1 patentably distinguishes over the cited art taken singularly or in any proper combination for at least the above noted reasons and is submitted to be allowable.

Claims 10, 16 and 17-20 patentably distinguish over the cited art for reasons similar to those of claim 1 and are also submitted to be allowable.

Claims 2-6, 8-9, 11-13 and 15, which depend from claims 1 and 10, are submitted to be allowable for the same reasons as claims 1 and 10, as well as for the additional features recited therein.

CONCLUSION

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

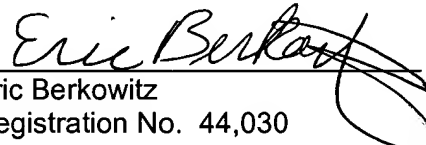
Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: 9/30/03

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